



East Central Idaho News

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON & TETON COUNTIES

ECONOMIC TRENDS

The Idaho Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area had the lowest April unemployment rate of any of the state's metropolitan areas at 2.8 percent as seen in East Central Idaho Table 1. The civilian labor force increased almost 3,000 over the year and jobs increased more than 3,000 as growth continues in all industries.

SPECIAL TOPIC: Gearing Up For Tourism

Tourist season has kicked in and roads are getting congested. Soon, tourists and residents alike will be winding throughout construction zones to get to their destinations. Whether a resident or tourist, here are a few must sees in the east central Idaho area.

Yellowstone Bear World is located on Highway 20, five miles south of Rexburg. On 120 acres, the park has 10 to 15 species of North American wildlife including wolves, elk, buffalo, deer and moose. Added to that are over 50 bears including six new cubs and three grizzlies in natural habitat. Set in a drive-through-soak-it-all-in setting, seeing the wonderful wildlife is only the beginning. A unique petting zoo currently contains deer fawns and a variety of barnyard animals but will add elk calves and other wildlife as the season progresses and more babies are born. Feeding baby and adult bears is the ultimate experience, and pictures are taken for keepsakes. Food is available to take care of the human appetite with a great menu at the Hungry Bear Café, offering novelties such as bear fries — potato French fries shaped as little bears. The gift shop is unique and full of treasures. Oh — and give the little tykes time to try out the park rides. Plan to spend at least half a day here. The park plans to see between 110,000 and 115,000 visitors this year, 97 percent of those will be tourists. Visit the Web site at <http://www.yellowstonebearworld.com>.

East Central Idaho Table 1: Idaho Falls MSA Labor Force & Employment
Bonneville and Jefferson counties

	Apr 2006*	Mar 2006	Apr 2005	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	62,870	63,260	60,080	-0.6	4.6
Unemployment	1,780	1,660	1,940	7.2	-8.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.8	2.6	3.2		
Total Employment	61,090	61,600	58,140	-0.8	5.1
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	61,790	61,790	59,340	0.0	4.1
Unemployment	1,720	1,980	1,880	-13.1	-8.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.8	3.2	3.2		
Total Employment	60,070	59,800	57,460	0.5	4.5
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	54,150	53,380	50,850	1.4	6.5
Goods-Producing Industries	7,320	7,060	6,750	3.7	8.4
Natural Resources & Mining	60	50	40	20.0	50.0
Construction	3,990	3,770	3,580	5.8	11.5
Manufacturing	3,270	3,240	3,130	0.9	4.5
Food Manufacturing	1,070	1,060	1,060	0.9	0.9
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	230	220	210	4.5	9.5
Machinery Manufacturing	150	150	160	0.0	-6.3
Other Manufacturing	1,820	1,810	1,700	0.6	7.1
Service-Providing Industries	46,830	46,320	44,100	1.1	6.2
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	13,430	13,260	12,660	1.3	6.1
Wholesale Trade	4,270	4,200	3,940	1.7	8.4
Retail Trade	7,500	7,450	7,190	0.7	4.3
Utilities	60	50	60	20.0	0.0
Transportation	1,600	1,560	1,470	2.6	8.8
Information	1,170	1,160	1,110	0.9	5.4
Financial Activities	2,120	2,110	1,950	0.5	8.7
Professional & Business Services	9,940	9,840	8,880	1.0	11.9
Educational & Health Services	6,940	6,910	6,560	0.4	5.8
Leisure & Hospitality	4,390	4,310	4,170	1.9	5.3
Other Services	1,990	1,970	1,940	1.0	2.6
Government Education	3,750	3,810	3,540	-1.6	5.9
Government Administration	3,100	2,950	3,290	5.1	-5.8

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

The Riot Zone in Rigby is a family fun park full of activities and concessions. Bumper boats; rock climbing towers; inflatable games including bouncy boxing, pedestal joust, the Velcro sticky wall, adrenaline rush obstacle course, huge slides and Jurassic Adventure; kiddie karts; go karts; miniature golf and a picnic pavilion are the main featured attractions. The north Rigby exit ramp off Highway 20 gives easy access and makes it a snap to give the family a break on the way to any number of destinations. Seasonal offerings include a corn maze, haunted house and winter ice skating. Visit the Web site at <http://riotzonefamilyfun.com>.

In the beautiful Teton valley of Driggs, Spud Fest '06 will be held July 28-29. Featuring independent films, documentaries, short films and feature films, the film fest also introduces up- and-coming producers. It features bands and singers, classical cars, clowns, prizes and much more. Originated by actress Dawn Wells, formerly MaryAnn of Gilligan's Island, the festival grows larger every year. Visit the Web site at <http://www.spudfilmstitute.com/>.

Idaho Falls features several different attractions. The beautiful Snake River runs through the city with the falls located by Broadway and River Parkway. The Snake River Duck Race and River Park Festival will be held on Aug. 12. Across from the falls is the Snake River Concert Series, free musical entertainment from various bands and musicians throughout the summer every Tuesday night from 7 to 9 p.m. from mid-June through August. To the south of the falls is a new business development called Taylor Crossing on the River with various businesses and waterways adding to the greenbelt along the river. The Scenic River Classic Race is an annual 5K and 10K walk/run held this year on June 17. Close by and on the river is the Eagle Rock Art Museum. Alive After Five is held every Wednesday from 5 to 8 p.m. in Historic Downtown between Park and B Streets featuring live bands, food vendors, beer and wine. The Fourth of July Parade is held throughout the city followed that night by the Melaleuca Freedom Celebration, a spectacular fireworks display set to music on the river. The Museum of Idaho located by the train tracks through Historic Downtown features "Savage Seas" of prehistoric water-dwelling creatures until June 22. After that, the feature will be Guns of the West and Hooks – fly fishing gear. Besides all this, there are many cultural arts productions throughout the town. For more information, visit <http://www.idahofallschamber.com/>.

Just 25 miles east of Idaho Falls is Swan Valley, a beautiful town located close to the gorgeous Palisades Reservoir. Besides having the infamous square ice cream cones, there are several places to stay and enjoy some truly relaxing time in nature's beauty. One of those is the Hansen Guest Ranch, where elegance and natural beauty are combined to give visitors the ultimate tranquil vacation. A remodeled 100-year-old barn features several large rooms plus a conference room highlighted by a fireplace, big-screen T.V. and plenty of windows for the view. Several other cabins dot the ranch where there is a separate building to eat and gather. Eating there is the ultimate clincher for the whole savory sensation. Home-made meals keep visitors eager for the next one, all unique, delightfully tempting and totally filling. Along with several acres to walk around, there is even a tennis court. Fishing, boating and hiking are within just a few miles of the ranch.

Visit <http://hansenguestranch.com/location.htm> for information.

Just west of Arco is the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve. A sea of lava flows, cinder cones and sagebrush provides a natural training ground for NASA astronauts. The preserve covers 750,000 acres and gives visitors plenty to see. Expect up to 30-minute delays on Highway 20/26/93 approximately three miles east and west of the entrance to the Craters Visitor Center. The Idaho Transportation Department is rerouting and resurfacing the roadway on weekdays throughout the summer. Make sure to visit the bookstore and visitor's center. More information at <http://www.nps.gov/crmo/>.

The Sacajawea Interpretive, Cultural and Educational Center is located in Salmon by the rivers and mountains of Sacajawea's homeland. The 71-acre park is dedicated to the commemoration of Sacajawea, her people and the Lewis and Clark expedition. The center is a unique outdoor experience for Lewis and Clark travelers to learn about culture and history in our beautiful and wild lands that retain much of their character from 200 years ago. For information and show times, visit <http://www.sacajaweacenter.org/>.

Red Fish Lake is nestled in the beautiful lands of Stanley. Fishing, hiking and water sports will take your breath away.

From 1986 to 2005, history has been made in Rexburg as folk dancers from all around the world gather at the Idaho International Dance and Music Festival. Festival 2005 was a great example of dancers sharing their culture while they absorb an understanding of the freedoms found in America. This year's teams include Canada, China, Georgia, Italy, Mexico, Panama, Romania, Serbia & Montenegro, South Africa, South Korea, Tahiti, Ukraine and the United States. The 2006 festival marks the 21st season for the Dance and Music Festival in Rexburg and kicks off July 29. Dancers come from approximately 10 different countries each year, and only one team from each country can participate. Saturday, July 29, will be the opening ceremony in Rexburg. For more information, go to <http://www.rexcc.com/festival/schedule.html>.

A few other great places include the St. Anthony Sand Dunes and Heise Hot Springs in Ririe beside Harri-man State Park near Ashton. It is definitely worth the visit to east central Idaho.

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